

Serial No. 10/654,981

AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS

The attached drawing sheet sheets include includes changes to Fig. 1.

Attachment: Replacement Sheet

REMARKS

The applicant notes with appreciation the acknowledgement of the claim for priority under section 119 and the notice that all of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

The applicant acknowledges and appreciates receiving a copy of form PTO-1449, on which the examiner has initialed all listed items.

On page 2 of the office action, the examiner objects to Fig. 1 of the drawings. Accordingly, corrected drawings are submitted herewith for Fig. 1. Withdrawal of the objection is respectfully requested.

Claims 2 - 17 are pending. Claim 1 has been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. The applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and allowance of this application in view of the above amendments and the following remarks.

On page 4 of the office action, dependent claims 5 and 6 were objected to, but indicated as being allowable if rewritten in independent form. Claims 5 and 6 have been re-written in independent form to include claim 1, and it is respectfully submitted that claims 5 and 6 as rewritten are allowable. Claim 1 was canceled, and claims dependent from claim 1 or 2 have been amended to depend from allowable claim 5. In addition, new claims 15 - 17, depending from allowable claim 6 have been added. The office action also indicated that claims 7 - 14 are in condition for allowance. In view of the above, the applicant submits that the claims are patentable.

The applicant has rewritten the claims in independent form since the office action indicated that claims 5 and 6 would be allowable if so re-written. However, the applicant does not concede that other features in the claims are found in the prior art.

The applicant wishes to clarify for the record, if necessary, that the claims have been amended to expedite prosecution. Moreover, the applicant reserves the right to pursue the original subject matter in a continuation application.

Any narrowing amendment to the claims in the present Amendment is not to be construed as a surrender of any subject matter between the original claims and the present claims; rather this is merely an attempt at providing one or more definitions of what the applicant believes to be suitable patent protection. In addition, the present claims provide the intended scope of protection that the applicant is seeking for this application. Therefore, no estoppel should be presumed, and the applicant's claims are intended to include a scope of protection under the Doctrine of Equivalents.

For all the reasons advanced above, the applicant respectfully submits that the claims as amended are allowable.

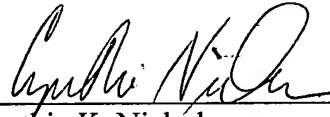
Claims 1-4 were rejected under 35 USC 102(e) as being unpatentable over US Patent 6,609,054, Wallace. In view of the cancellation of claim 1 and the amendment of claims 2 – 4 to depend from allowable rewritten claim 5, it is respectfully submitted that the rejection is moot and should be withdrawn.

In view of the forgoing, the applicant respectfully submits that this application is in condition for allowance. A timely notice to that effect is respectfully requested. If questions relating to patentability remain, the examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone.

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Please charge any unforeseen fees that may be due to Deposit Account No. 50-1147.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Cynthia K. Nicholson', written over a horizontal line.

Cynthia K. Nicholson

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